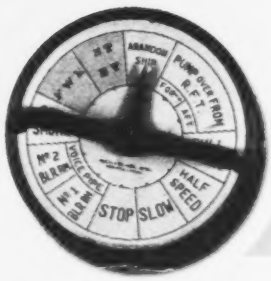
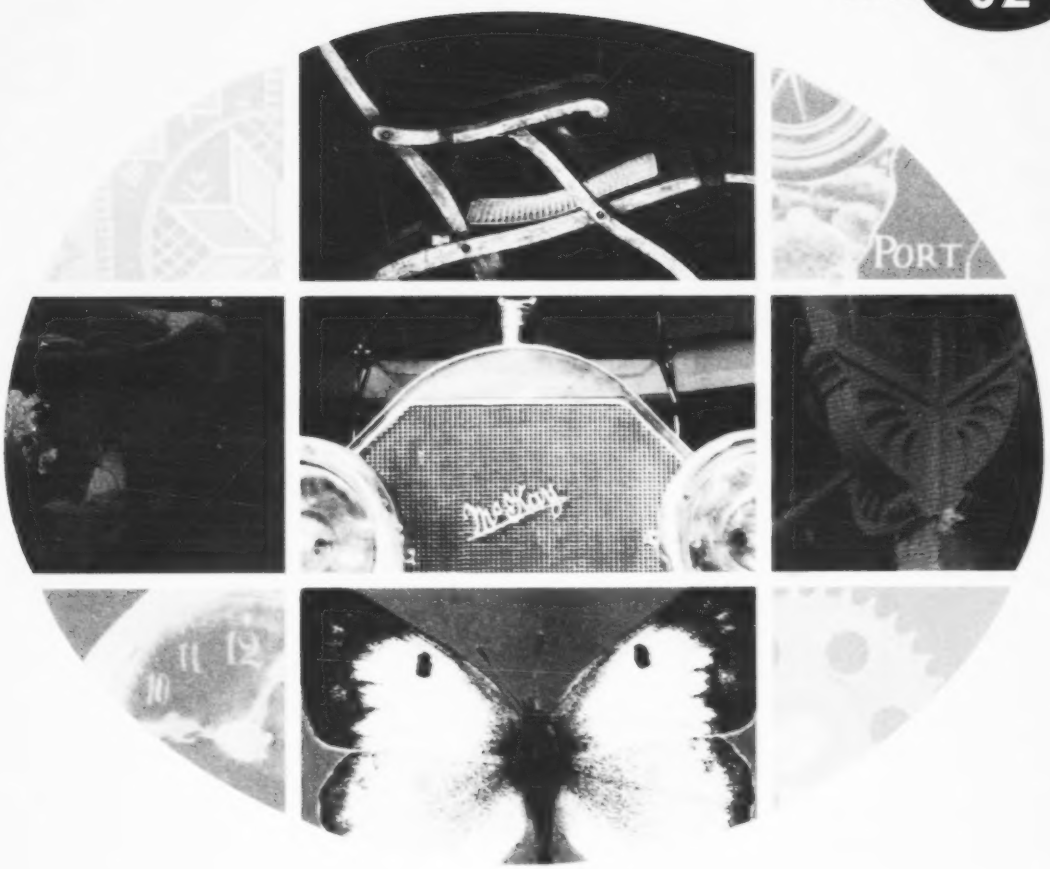


Collection Management Policy

for the Nova Scotia Museum

OCTOBER 02



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Collection Management Policy

for the Nova Scotia Museum

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Heritage Division, Nova Scotia Museum
Department of Tourism and Culture
Attention: NSM Books
1747 Summer Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3H 3A6
Canada

Also available online at
http://museum.gov.ns.ca

Project Team
Chris Lavergne
Heritage Resource Services, Nova Scotia Museum

Michelle Lelièvre
Museum of Industry

Valerie Lenethen
Heritage Resource Services, Nova Scotia Museum

Debra McNabb (chair)
Museum of Industry

Marven Moore
Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

Deborah Scott
History Section, Nova Scotia Museum

Alex Wilson
Museum of Natural History

With assistance from
David Christianson
History Section, Nova Scotia Museum

Bob Ogilvie
Heritage Resource Services, Nova Scotia Museum

Stephen Powell
History Section, Nova Scotia Museum

Scott Robson
History Section, Nova Scotia Museum

Miles Russell
Ross Farm Museum

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Nova Scotia Museum (NSM) is a corporate body that operates a provincially owned, decentralized museum system. It provides Nova Scotians and visitors to the province with opportunities to experience and learn about the natural and cultural heritage of Nova Scotia.

Material evidence of the province's cultural history and natural history is the primary resource used by the NSM. The NSM acquires and preserves artifacts and specimens for study, reference, and presentation to the public, together with information about them. The collection is displayed and stored in purpose-built and historic buildings in communities throughout the province. (It should be noted that historic buildings and structures are not considered part of the collection.) The NSM is responsible for preserving the collection and making it accessible to present and future generations.

This policy provides standards and consistency for the selection, acquisition, preservation, use, and documentation of artifacts and specimens in the collection, and for disposal if necessary. It recognizes the decentralized nature of the collection and of collection management responsibilities, and it considers past and present practice, professional and museological standards, collection management issues, and planning for the future.

This policy provides the framework for guidelines and procedures. These are contained in the *Collections Management Policy, Procedures and Guidelines Manual* related to this policy, and must be used in conjunction with other Nova Scotia Museum policies.

1.1 Legal Authority

The Nova Scotia Museum, governed by the Nova Scotia Museum Act (Chapter 315 Revised Statutes, 1989), acts as trustee for the collection. Ownership of the collection rests with Her Majesty the Queen in right of the Province of Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia Museum also acts as the principal repository for artifacts and specimens collected or seized under the authority of the province's Special Places Protection Act.

The Nova Scotia Museum respects the authority of relevant municipal, provincial, federal, and international legislation and conventions applicable to collection management.

2.0 NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Nova Scotia Museum is led by an Executive Director who oversees five operational units: Heritage Resource Services, History Section, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Museum of Industry, and Museum of Natural History. Each has a director. All units have collection-related responsibilities. Heritage Resource Services provides advice and support in the area of collection management, including registration, conservation, and information management. The History Section manages artifacts associated with the province's cultural heritage, including artifacts located at 23 sites, and ethnology and archaeology collections. The Maritime Museum of the Atlantic manages artifacts that represent the province's marine history, while the Museum of Industry focuses on artifacts that represent the industrial development of the province. The Museum of Natural History is responsible for botany, zoology, and geology collections. In some instances, overlaps and exceptions in these areas of responsibility occur.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The Executive Director is ultimately responsible for the collection and, through unit Directors, ensures that collection management policies, guidelines, procedures, and standards are developed and implemented. The Director, Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate is responsible for ensuring that anyone who works with the collection is aware of policies and procedures. Staff and volunteers must follow these procedures and standards in a consistent manner throughout the Nova Scotia Museum.

The *Code of Conduct for Civil Service in Nova Scotia* prescribes standards for the ethical behaviour of civil servant staff.

Each unit Director normally delegates responsibility for the development and preservation of the collection to the Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate. The collection management sections of the Nova Scotia Museum have direct and prime responsibility for the acquisition, preservation, and documentation of the collection.

The development, management, and preservation of the collection at the Nova Scotia Museum's locally managed sites are the responsibility of staff in the History Section. Where locally managed museums have designated collection staff, a greater degree of responsibility for the collection is delegated. Collection-related responsibilities for both the Local Management Group and the Nova Scotia Museum are described in *Site Operating Guidelines.*

Staff and volunteers will strive to maintain artifacts, specimens, and collection records in an environment conducive to preservation. Standards vary according to the nature of the collection and display or storage conditions; these will be described in the NSM's *Collections Management Policy, Procedures and Guidelines Manual* related to this policy. The Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate will ensure that the collection is inspected regularly for evidence of damage or deterioration. Any staff member or volunteer who discovers a preservation problem or

damage to an artifact or specimen must document and report it immediately to the Manager of Collections or designate.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for maintaining the security of the collection. This encompasses loss or breaches of security. Staff and volunteers mus document and report immediately any confirmed loss or breach of security through the unit Director to the Executive Director. In some cases (e.g. firearms), legal considerations may require that the police also be notified.

The Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate will ensure that artifacts or specimens having the potential to be hazardous to the public, museum staff, volunteers, the environment, or the collection will be properly handled and stored. All safety regulations (e.g. OHS, WHMIS) must be followed.

The Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate will ensure that staff and volunteers who have physical access to the collection are trained in and use appropriate care and handling.

3.1 Ethics

In all activities relating to collection management, an employee must not be in conflict of interest with the purposes of the Nova Scotia Museum. If a conflict develops, the interests of the NSM will take precedence.

The Nova Scotia Museum will be guided by established professional standards and ethics. The Board of Governors of the Nova Scotia Museum has adopted the Canadian Museums Association's *Ethics Guidelines* (1999). The current version of this document is part of the *Collections Management Policy, Procedures and Guidelines Manual* related to this policy.

Nova Scotia provincial legislation takes precedence over Nova Scotia Museum policies, and Nova Scotia Museum policies take precedence over professional ethical guidelines.

4.0 COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

The Nova Scotia Museum collection consists of specimens and artifacts that represent the natural history and cultural history of Nova Scotia, as well as non-Nova Scotian material acquired for comparative study. The collection does not include historic buildings. The Nova Scotia Museum collects in four distinct areas: natural history, marine history, industrial history, and cultural history, including ethnology and archaeology.

Development of the collection will meet both the immediate and long-term objectives of the NSM. Development will build on strengths and address weaknesses of the collection as assessed by appropriate curatorial staff, and will take into account current and future projects and needs. Strategies will include both planned and opportunistic approaches.

In developing the natural history collections, the principal objectives are to acquire and preserve

- specimens of animals, plants, rocks, minerals, fossils, and associated materials that occur in Nova Scotia
- specimens that do not occur in Nova Scotia but that are related to Nova Scotian material, for special study, exhibit, and educational use

In developing the cultural history collections, the principal objectives are to acquire and preserve

- artifacts produced in Nova Scotia
- artifacts used in Nova Scotia but made elsewhere
- artifacts not made or used in Nova Scotia but related to the province, collected for special study, exhibit, and educational use

The collecting strategies of the Nova Scotia Museum consider the interests of community, regional, national, and international public institutions.

5.0 ACQUISITION

The Nova Scotia Museum obtains artifacts and specimens through a variety of methods. Staff must undertake acquisition in accordance with the highest professional standards and ethics. When an acquisition is considered the NSM must make a serious, diligent, and documented effort to establish ownership. In the case of gifts or bequests, purchases, or exchanges, clear title must be transferred to the NSM. Conditions can not be attached that would limit the NSM's use of the material, except with the approval of the unit Director. Conditions can not be illegal.

The Nova Scotia Museum does not acquire buildings for the provincial collection.

5.1 Criteria for Acquisition

The Nova Scotia Museum will strive to acquire artifacts and specimens that generally are complete and in good condition, and for which provenance or locality is well documented. The decision to acquire an artifact or specimen will be based upon the following considerations:

- relevance to the mandate of the Nova Scotia Museum and to collection development objectives
- significance, such as association with an event, person, historical period, or geographic area
- representation of themes, processes, activities, and cultural norms with provincial significance
- results of primary research in Nova Scotia, such as voucher specimens and samples
- availability of human and financial resources to acquire, document, preserve, store, and exhibit the artifact or specimen
- opportunities for use, exhibition, research, and other program requirements
- physical condition
- cultural sensitivity
- oral or written documentation to support ownership, authenticity, study, and use
- absence of threats to users or to other elements of the collection
- absence of restrictions on use or disposition
- compliance with legislated responsibilities defined under the Special Places Protection Act (1980)
- compliance with other applicable legislation and regulations

5.2 Approval Process for Acquisition

Acquisitions are ultimately the responsibility of the unit Director; this responsibility is generally delegated to the Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate. The decision to acquire an artifact or specimen will be made by an acquisition committee of at least two people appointed by the unit Director, which must include at least one of the following: the appropriate Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate responsible for the collection. The Director may appoint other staff as appropriate. The committee will not include any individual offering an artifact or specimen to the NSM.

In some circumstances, acquisitions are taken to the Board of Governors for recommendation. These include:

- purchases for which funds are requested from the Boards Endowment Fund
- purchases in excess of $25,000
- donations or purchases of a potentially controversial nature (e.g. cultural sensitivity, negative public scrutiny)

- acquisitions that require a significant outlay of resources, at the time of acceptance or in the future. (e.g. for storage, conservation, etc.)

The prospective donor or vendor must be issued a *Receipt for Artifacts and Specimens* when artifacts or specimens are received by the NSM.

A *Gift Agreement* or invoice must be signed to prove the transfer of ownership if the artifact or specimen is accepted. If the artifact or specimen is rejected, the owner will be notified and given 90 days to retrieve the object. If the owner does not retrieve the object within 90 days, it will be disposed of in accordance with the NSM's guidelines and procedures, treated as abandoned property in accordance with Section 3.3 of the Public Trustees Act.

5.3 Methods of Acquisition

Artifacts and specimens are acquired through field collecting, gift or bequest, purchase, exchange, and transfer; some are also acquired in-house, and found in the collection.

a) Field Collecting

Specimens or artifacts may be collected by museum staff, or by others acting on behalf of the NSM, directly from their context in the field.

b) Field Collecting, Special Places

The Special Places Protection Act legislates the Nova Scotia Museum as the legal repository for all archaeological and paleontological material recovered in Nova Scotia since 1980. A Heritage Research Permit, issued by the Nova Scotia Museum, is required for recovery of this material.

The NSM also has the legal right to archaeological and paleontological material recovered in the field by unauthorized individuals.

The NSM may retain only those artifacts and specimens that are deemed to be significant.

Individuals may legally own archaeological and paleontological material collected in Nova Scotia prior to 1980. Consequently, this material is acquired in similar fashion to any other artifact or specimen.

c) Gift or Bequest

A gift or bequest may be accepted from any source, including a staff member.

d) Purchase

Artifacts or specimens may be purchased from any sources. However, purchase from a member of the Board of Governors, staff, volunteer, or research associate of the Nova Scotia Museum, including directly and locally managed sites, their family members or friends, or an organization in which the individual has an interest, requires the approval of the unit Director and/or the Executive Director. In such cases the Nova Scotia Museum will establish a purchase price that reflects fair market value, with adherence to ethical guidelines.

e) Exchange

The exchange of specimens or artifacts between institutions is an established and useful means of developing and improving a collection. Exchanges may be arranged by the Manager of Collections or Curator responsible for that part of the collection, with the approval of the unit Director. Exchanges may be made provided that

- both parties are in full agreement with the terms and conditions
- both the acquisition and the disposal of artifacts or specimens are documented for the permanent records
- the removal of the object would not impair the collection in any functional way
- the removal will be approved through the deaccessioning process (see section 11)

f) Transfer
The Nova Scotia Museum may acquire artifacts or specimens from other Nova Scotia government departments or agencies. The transfer must be supported by documentation. Transfer includes objects classified as treasure under the Province's Treasure Trove Act (R.S.N.S 1967, c. 314). A representative sample of any treasure is selected as royalty and delivered to the Nova Scotia Museum to be maintained on behalf of the people of Nova Scotia.

g) In-house
Objects created or used within the Nova Scotia Museum may be subsequently accessioned into the collection.

h) Found in the Collection
Unaccessioned objects that have been treated as artifacts or specimens over time but for which acquisition documentation can not be found are designated 'found in the collection.' These objects will be accessioned if approved through the acquisition process.

5.4 Income Tax Receipts and Appraisals

Income tax receipts for artifacts or specimens, including those in a working collection, are available to all donors, including staff members. The receipt will reflect fair market value at the time of acquisition, determined by appraisal.

The Nova Scotia Museum will not issue a tax receipt before a *Gift Agreement* is signed. It is preferable that an appraisal not be undertaken before a *Gift Agreement* is signed as this action may ultimately reflect upon the reputation of the NSM.

All tax receipts must be signed by the Executive Director, who must keep a copy of the tax receipt in perpetuity.

An appraisal for a gift with a fair market value of $1,000 or less can be provided by a qualified staff member. When the value exceeds that amount, a qualified staff member can appraise it if there is difficulty finding an independent appraiser, or if it involves unreasonable expense. (Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, *Gifts and Income Tax*, P113(e), revised 2000) Whenever possible, it is recommended that an appraisal for a gift with a value of more than $1,000 be undertaken by an appraiser acting at arm's length from the NSM and the donor.

The cost of an outside appraisal for income tax purposes will generally be borne by the institution as financial resources permit. Otherwise the NSM will negotiate with the potential donor.

The Nova Scotia Museum does not undertake paid or unpaid third-party appraisals. Museum staff will not recommend to the public a specific dealer, appraiser, or auctioneer, but may provide a list of such people with the understanding that this does not constitute an endorsement.

Application for certification as Cultural Property for income tax purposes may be made for artifacts and specimens that appear to be of outstanding significance and national importance. The process is initiated by the Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate. All applications and correspondence will be submitted to the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board by the Executive Director.

6.0 DOCUMENTATION

The NSM must accurately and thoroughly document the collection to realize its value and significance, and to fulfill the institution's stewardship role. Documentation is essential for collection development, research, preservation, and interpretation. Documentation is the responsibility of the unit Director, Manager of Collections, or Curator, and other staff as appropriate.

Documentation will include information, in written, electronic*, audio visual, or graphic form, pertaining to the identity, locality, provenance, and transfer of legal title of artifacts and specimens in the collection, and other related information regarding significance, function, description, condition, and usage after acquisition. (* The Museum Information Management System (MIMS) stores electronic records for the collection of artifacts and specimens.)

When being integrated into the collection, each artifact and specimen must be described in sufficient detail to enable the detection of any deterioration. Any change in condition or treatment to an artifact or specimen will also be documented.

Temporary or permanent change in the status of an artifact or specimen, such as an outgoing loan, deaccessioning, or transfer to a working collection, must be thoroughly documented.

The NSM will use accepted and consistent standards, methods, and procedures to document the collection. Documentation must be maintained in perpetuity. Normally, documentation itself is not considered part of the collection.

Legal documents dealing with acquisitions must be kept in hard-copy form, with a duplicate set stored in an off-site location. Copies of electronic records stored on the Museum Information Management System (MIMS) must be maintained and stored off-site. Documentation should be maintained in a secure and stable environment.

While some documentation may be subject to restrictions, under the Province's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPOP), the NSM should ensure that information about the collection is easily accessible to the public.

7.0 PRESERVATION

The NSM has a responsibility to preserve its collection in perpetuity, with the exception of artifacts and specimens designated as 'working collection.' This includes artifacts and specimens in storage, on exhibit, used in programs and research, on loan, and in transit. In all of these activities, the NSM will comply with the *Collection Conservation Policy for the Nova Scotia Museum, 1997.*

The preservation of the collection is the direct responsibility of the unit Director, Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate, and other staff as appropriate. However, all staff and volunteers must share the responsibility.

8.0 USE

The Nova Scotia Museum is committed to the long-term preservation of artifacts and specimens in the collection. However, a balance must be struck between the preservation of the collection and its use for research, exhibition, educational, promotional, and commercial purposes. The Nova Scotia Museum acknowledges that access to and use of the collection, by staff and the public, increases risk to artifacts and specimens and requires appropriate controls.

Access to the collection is provided through exhibitions, programs, events, publications, collection records, research files, visual resources, and consultation with curatorial staff. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy legislation restricts access to some information, including that related to the location of vulnerable cultural history or natural history sites.

Access to and use of archaeological and ethnological artifacts must consider cultural sensitivities.

Access to and handling of firearms is restricted under federal legislation.

The collection must be organized and managed in such a way that it is readily accessible for all purposes consistent with the goals of the NSM.

8.1 Staff Access to the Collection

The level of staff access to the collection is determined by the appropriate unit Director, Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate. Staff and volunteers who handle artifacts and specimens must be appropriately trained and supervised.

8.2 Public Use of the Collection

The Nova Scotia Museum allows limited use of its collection by the public for commercial and non-commercial purposes. This may involve *physical* or *intellectual* access to the collection.

Physical access to artifacts and specimens is provided through exhibitions, programs, events, and tours. Other requests for physical access will be considered individually (e.g. loans, individual requests, and fee-for-use situations).

Intellectual access to the collection through records, images, and other information may be requested for publication, research, web sites, electronic media, display, promotional materials, personal use, media, films, and advertising.

Access to and use of the collection is at the discretion of the unit Director, Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate, and is generally provided to any person who can demonstrate a need. Determining factors include:

- condition of the artifact or specimen
- risk to the artifact or specimen
- location
- security
- health and safety risks
- copyright
- artist's rights
- intended use
- expertise of the enquirer
- human and financial resources available

Access and fee structure for use of the collection for commercial purposes are governed by specific policies and fee schedules.

In keeping with its educational mandate, the Nova Scotia Museum supports use for non-commercial purposes with a discounted fee structure.

Any agreement involving use of the collection must be documented in writing, signed by both parties, and approved by the Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate. The Nova Scotia Museum must be credited for any use of its collection.

8.3 Working Collection

The Nova Scotia Museum recognizes the value of using artifacts and specimens in public and school programs. These programs require objects that can be operated or handled by staff, volunteers, and the public, and that, ultimately, may be expendable. To fulfil this need the NSM has established a working collection. Collection staff will advise on the appropriate use of these artifacts and specimens.

The curatorial decision that leads to a designation of 'working collection' also may result in a reduced level of care, documentation, conservation, and restoration.

8.3.1 Designation of a working artifact or specimen

Artifacts and specimens may be acquired specifically for the working collection or may be transferred from the permanent collection to the working collection.

The decision to designate an artifact or specimen as part of the working collection will be made by a review committee of at least two people appointed by the unit Director. This committee will include at least one of the following: Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate responsible for the collection and other appropriate staff. The transfer of an artifact or specimen from the permanent collection must be approved by the unit Director.

Artifacts or specimens designated as part of a working collection must

- fulfil a program need
- be appropriate to the program
- be demonstrated to be expendable (e.g. a duplicate with no defined purpose, over representation in the collection)
- be safe to use
- not contravene legislation (e.g. firearms)

Artifacts or specimens donated specifically for use in the working collection will be identified as such on the *Gift Agreement*. When an artifact or specimen is transferred to the working collection, the reasons for the change in status must be documented. All artifacts and specimens acquired for the working collection must be registered and catalogued in accordance with museum standards. Artifacts or specimens in the working collection must be clearly labeled as working collection, and the collection record will indicate the status of the objects as working collection.

8.3.2 Deaccessioning an artifact or specimen from a working collection

When an artifact or specimen in the 'working collection' is no longer needed or useful, it must be deaccessioned in accordance with section 11.0 of this policy or returned to the permanent collection.

8.4 Other Materials

Material may be acquired for educational programs, exhibits, props, spare parts, or for purposes such as training or analysis. The material is not considered part of the collection.

8.5 Change in Location

Artifacts and specimens are moved among Nova Scotia Museum sites for a variety of reasons. Some of these relocations are short term and others are long term.

When an artifact or specimen is moved for a short period, any documentation, including the accession or catalogue file, remains at the original site, a change of location must be recorded in the artifact record.

When an artifact or specimen is moved for a long period, the accession or catalogue file goes to the destination site; the site of origin will maintain a copy of the file for audit purposes.

9.0 LOANS

9.1 Loans to the Museum

The Nova Scotia Museum borrows artifacts and specimens for exhibition, study, or other purposes consistent with the mandate of the NSM and for a specified time period.

Loans are made to the Nova Scotia Museum by institutions and individuals. Before a loan transaction is completed the NSM must make a serious, diligent, and documented effort to establish ownership. The lender retains legal ownership of the artifact or specimen. A loan agreement, specifying intended use, must be completed for such material and the transaction must be approved by the unit Director, Manager of Collections, or designate approved by the unit Director. All loans for traveling exhibitions must also be approved by the unit Director.

The Nova Scotia Museum will provide the same standard of care and security for the artifacts and specimens on loan to the NSM as it does for those in its collection. Treatment will not be undertaken on borrowed artifacts and specimens without prior written consent from the owner. Any treatments must be documented. In the unusual event that a borrowed object can not be returned to the lender after a serious, diligent, and documented effort has been made, it should be treated as abandoned property in accordance with Section 3.3 of the Public Trustees Act.

When the Nova Scotia Museum borrows material and exhibits from another institution, it will follow the procedures prescribed by the lending institution. When the Nova Scotia Museum borrows material from individuals, or from institutions with no lending procedures or forms, it will follow the procedures of the Nova Scotia Museum.

Incoming loans must be fully documented. The documentation will include one copy of the signed loan form and information relating to value and condition. These records must be retained in perpetuity.

Establishing the value of the item for insurance purposes is the responsibility of the lender.

Artifacts and specimens moved within the Nova Scotia Museum, either short term or long term, are not considered loans (see section 8.5).

9.2 Loans from the Museum

The Nova Scotia Museum normally lends artifacts and specimens to institutions. Loans are not normally made to individuals. The purpose of the loan must be consistent with the interests of the NSM, and not pose undue risk to the artifact or specimen. Loans are made for a specified time period.

The Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate is responsible for ensuring that those who borrow or otherwise use material for any purpose are able to provide necessary care. Individuals within both the borrowing and lending institutions taking responsibility for the transaction must be authorized to do so. All loans from the Nova Scotia Museum must be approved by the unit Director or designate.

Natural history Type Specimens normally will not be loaned.

Outgoing loans must be fully documented. The documentation will include one copy of the signed loan form and information relating to value and condition. These records must be retained in perpetuity.

The Nova Scotia Museum reserves the right not to lend artifacts or specimens.

10.0 INSURANCE

The Nova Scotia Museum provides insurance for its collection and for loans to and from the NSM. The NSM carries several types of insurance, including blanket property, fine arts, marine, and liability. Additional insurance may be required under certain circumstances. Unit Directors or designates are responsible for insuring the collection at fair market value, acquiring additional coverage when necessary, and providing valuations for insurance purposes.

11.0 DEACCESSIONING

In the Nova Scotia Museum there is a strong presumption against removing accessioned objects from the collection. However, the NSM recognizes that there are circumstances when deaccessioning can refine the quality and improve the relevance of a museum's collection.

Deaccessioning must be undertaken in accordance with the highest professional standards and ethics, and must not be influenced by arbitrary taste or individual preference. Reasons must be ethical, defensible, and objective. Deaccessioning must be undertaken with great scrutiny, and requires institutional review and approval from the Board of Governors, to ensure a system of checks and balances.

The deaccessioned artifacts or specimens must be thoroughly documented along with the reasons for their deaccession and the processes involved. These records must be retained by the NSM.

Any disposal of artifacts or specimens will be in accordance with the Surplus Crown Assets Disposal Act and its regulations.

A concerted and documented effort must be made to keep deaccessioned objects in the public domain.

11.1 Criteria for Deaccessioning

The Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate initiating a proposal must be able to demonstrate clearly the need for deaccessioning, in accordance with one or more of the following criteria:

- a specimen or artifact constitutes a physical hazard or health risk to staff or the public
- a specimen or artifact does not fall within the Nova Scotia Museum mandate and written collection development objectives
- the Nova Scotia Museum is incapable of providing the conditions necessary for minimum curatorial care
- a specimen or artifact has deteriorated or is damaged to a point where it does not serve a useful purpose or poses a preservation threat to other elements of the collection or museum structures
- a specimen or artifact is a duplicate having no definable purpose; provenance and other documetation must be taken into account when determining duplicate status
- a specimen or artifact is over-representative of a particular type in the collection; provenance and other documentation must be taken into account when determining a specimen or artifact is over-represented
- a specimen or artifact has a fraudulent, unethical, or illegal provenance
- a specimen or artifact has been misidentified, or is found to be a fake, forgery, or copy with no definable purpose
- the potential for gaining knowledge by destructive analysis of the object justifies its loss from the collection

The NSM will not deaccession an artifact or specimen at the request of the donor or seller.

An artifact or specimen may be removed from the collection as a result of a request for repatriation.

11.2 Conditions for Deaccessioning

When deaccessioning is initiated, the NSM must ensure that

- it has clear title to the object or, in the case of poorly or undocumented material, be able to demonstrate that it has made a serious, diligent, and documented investigation to determine ownership
- there are no legal or legislative restrictions that prohibit deaccessioning the artifact or specimen

- the object has been offered as an artifact or specimen to other museums within the Nova Scotia Museum
- an object for which a request for repatriation reasonably could be expected to arise in the future is not to be considered for deaccessioning for other reasons
- the reasons for the removal of any artifact or specimen from the collection must be thoroughly documented in accordance with the highest professional standards, and the documentation retained, so that the reasons for such action can be known in the future
- if an artifact or specimen is undocumented, the NSM must make a serious, diligent, and documented effort to learn more about it before considering deaccessioning

11.3 Process for Deaccessioning

The process of deaccessioning must be initiated with a written proposal supported by appropriate documentation and a recommended means of disposition. This proposal must be developed in consultation with the Manager of Collections, Curator, or designate responsible for the collection. The proposal must be approved by the unit Director, Executive Director, and the Board of Governors.

11.4 Methods of Disposition

A demonstrated effort must be made to keep a deaccessioned artifact or specimen in the public domain by offering it to other museums, universities, or public institutions (as a gift or for exchange or sale) before sale to others. Consideration should be given to retaining the artifact or specimen in the community, within Nova Scotia, and then Canada, according to where it is most relevant. A member of the Board of Governors, staff, or volunteer of the Nova Scotia Museum, including directly and locally managed sites, their family members or business associates, and organizations associated with financial or in-kind support may not acquire, through any means, any artifact or specimen deaccessioned by the Nova Scotia Museum.

When the NSM chooses to deaccession an artifact or specimen, staff may consider, as a courtesy, notifying the original donor.

The following methods may be considered for the disposition of an artifact or specimen:

a) Internal Transfer
within the Nova Scotia Museum for non-collection use (e.g. destructive analysis, props, training, etc.)

b) Gift
to another museum, university, or public institution

c) Exchange
with another museum, university, or public institution

d) Sale
The NSM may sell deaccessioned material, and should attempt, where possible, to establish a sale price based on fair market value. Disposition by sale, in order of preference, includes:

i) a museum, university, or public institution.
ii) the highest bidder at a publicly advertised auction sale, or by tender
iii) reputable and established dealers
iv) sale for scrap value

To ensure that the transaction is public and fair, arrangements for public sale of NSM objects will be in accordance with the Surplus Crown Assets Disposal Act and its regulations.

e) Destruction
Disposition of an artifact by destruction will be permitted if

- the object is hazardous or poses a danger to staff, public, or the collection

- the object has deteriorated or is damaged to a point where it does not serve a definable purpose

- all reasonable efforts have been made to dispose of the object through other methods

Two witnesses must be present to observe the destruction.

f) Return
According to the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (see Bulletin IT-110R3 *Gifts and Official Donation Receipts*, section 3), the Nova Scotia Museum cannot return an artifact or specimen to the original donor, whether or not a tax receipt was issued. An artifact or specimen may be returned to the rightful owner if it is determined that the NSM does not have legitimate ownership, or as a result of a repatriation process.

11.5 Communication Plan for Deaccessioning

The NSM must create a public communication plan when an artifact or specimen has been recommended for deaccessioning. The plan must address the intent and circumstances of the decision to deaccession the artifact or specimen. The NSM unit that recommends deaccessioning is responsible for creating the plan and presenting it to the Executive Director for approval.

12.0 REPATRIATION

The Nova Scotia Museum may repatriate artifacts or specimens in accordance with the principles and guidelines stated in the Canadian Museums Association's *Ethics Guidelines*, and in the Canadian Archaeological Association's *Statement of Principles for Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal Peoples*.

All requests for repatriation must be approached with respect and sensitivity.

The NSM recognizes that requests for repatriation can only be resolved on a case-by-case basis.

13.0 COOPERATION WITH INSTITUTIONS

The Nova Scotia Museum encourages the development of public collections in other institutions, to the extent practicable, by offering advice, by identifying and authenticating artifacts and specimens, and by cooperating with the collecting activities of other institutions.

14.0 POLICY REVIEW

This *Collection Management Policy* will be formally reviewed by the Nova Scotia Museum every five years. Amendments may be required at other times and must be approved by the Board of Governors, Nova Scotia Museum.

Signature: _____
for the NSM Board of Governors

Date: Aug 26/02

David Newlands
for the Nova Scotia Museum

August 26, 2002

GLOSSARY

Certain words or phrases used in this policy have developed specific meaning through museum usage:

Accessioning
The act of recording an addition to a collection.

Acquisition
The act of taking legal possession and ownership of an artifact or specimen to develop a collection.

Artifact
An object showing human workmanship or modification, as distinguished from a natural object (specimen); may include contemporary and period images (photographs, drawings, charts, plans, maps, etc.), books, oral history recordings, theme- related or site-specific archival materials.

Collection Management
The actions taken or co-ordinated toward the acquisition, documentation, preservation, use, and disposition of a museum collection in order to meet the museums goals. These actions include maintaining registration records, accessioning, cataloguing, ensuring proper storage, taking regular inventory, and monitoring the condition of artifacts and specimens in the collection.

Conservation
The application of science to the examination, maintenance, and treatment of artifacts or specimens. Its principal aim is to stabilize artifacts or specimens in their present state. It encompasses both preventive conservation and conservation treatments.

Conservation Treatment
An intervention causing changes in the physical properties or structure of an artifact or specimen.

Deaccessioning
The permanent removal of an artifact or specimen from the collection, following stringent guidelines and detailed procedures.

Designate
A person delegated to undertake specific activities by the responsible Nova Scotia Museum authority.

Directly Managed Museum
A provincially owned site, operated by the History Section of the Nova Scotia Museum.
The 8 directly managed museums are:
Balmoral Grist Mill Museum, Fisherman's Life Museum, Haliburton House Museum, Lawrence House Museum, Prescott House Museum, Shand House Museum, Sutherland Steam Mill Museum, Uniacke Estate Museum Park.

Disposition
The method of removing an artifact or specimen from the collection, after it has been deaccessioned.

Duplicate
Either of two things exactly alike and usually produced at the same time.

Interpretation
A communication process designed to reveal meanings and relationships (of cultural and natural heritage) to visitors, through first-hand experience with objects, artifacts, landscapes, and sites. (John Veverka)
An educational activity that aims to reveal meanings and relationships (of cultural and natural heritage) through the use of original objects, first-hand experience, and illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information. (Freeman Tilden, 1957)

Locally Managed Museum
A provincially owned site, operated by a community-based, incorporated, non-profit society in partnership with the Nova Scotia Museum.
Operational funding, operating guidelines, support, and liaison are provided through the History Section of the Nova Scotia Museum.

The 15 locally managed museums are: Barrington Woolen Mill Museum, Cossit House Museum, Dory Shop Museum, Firefighters' Museum of Nova Scotia, Fundy Geological Museum; McCulloch House Museum, North Hills Museum, Nova Scotia Highland Village, Old Meeting House Museum, Perkins House Museum, Ross Farm Museum, Ross-Thomson House Museum, Sherbrooke Village, Wile Carding Mill Museum, and, Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic.

Material Evidence
Any artifact or specimen that serves as a source of information about cultural history or natural history.

Preservation
The effect of all actions performed to maintain and stabilize the condition of the objects in the collection, in order to pass them along to future generations. It includes conservation treatments and preventive conservation. It also includes actions that have a direct effect on the physical well-being of the collection, such as the use of safe and proper storage, handling, and exhibition techniques.

Preventive Conservation
Non-intrusive actions taken to slow or stop deterioration and to prevent damage to artifacts or specimens.

Provenance
The history of the artifact or specimen, its origin or source. The more common term for anthropological collections is 'provenience,' which defines an object in terms of the specific geographic location of origin. In scientific collections, the term 'locality' is used, meaning specific geographic point of origin.

Public Institution
An institution that is publically owned, that is operated for the benefit of the public and not for the benefit of a private person, that is established for educational and cultural purposes, that preserves artifacts or specimens, and that exhibits or otherwise makes them available to the public.

Restoration
The removal or modification of existing material, or the addition of new material, in order to reinstate earlier known aesthetic, historical, or scientific values.

Specimen
A natural object, including rock, mineral, fossil, animal, or plant material, as distinguished from an object made or modified by human actions (artifact).

Type Specimen
The specimen upon which the original description of a new taxonomic group (genus, species, etc.) is based. The term is applied to fossils and minerals as well as living organisms. (see the McGraw-Hill *Encyclopedia of Science and Technology* for a detailed description of the various categories of type specimens)

Unit
One of five administrative divisions of the Nova Scotia Museum. They are: Heritage Resource Services, History Section, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Museum of Natural History, Museum of Industry. Each unit has its own Director.

Voucher Specimen
A scientific specimen preserved and deposited into a research collection to support the results of a particular piece of research or analysis.